

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, MASS, TU, US

SUBJECT: FONMIN ESENBEL STATEMENTS ON AID CUTOFF AND
US-TURKISH RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY: FONMIN ESENBEL, IN MARCH 22 STATEMENT ON
TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) AND IN MARCH 23 MILLIYET INTER-
VIEW, DISCUSSED IMPACT OF US AID CUTOFF ON US-TURKISH AND TURKISH-
NATO RELATIONS. ESENBEL WARNED THAT A CONTINUATION OF THE "EMBARGO"
WOULD HARM US-TURKISH RELATIONS AND THAT TURKEY WOULD WAIT NO
LONGER THAN THE END OF APRIL BEFORE INITIATING RETALIATORY MEASURES
AGAINST THE JOINT DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS. END SUMMARY

1. FONMIN ESENBEL COMMENTED ON US-TURKISH RELATIONS AND THE
CUTOFF OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT)
MARCH 22 AND IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MILLIYET WHICH APPEARED
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THE FOLLOWING DAY.

2. MAJOR PORTION OF TRT BROADCAST:

BEGIN QUOTE: WITH THE KNOWN DECISION OF CONGRESS THE GROUND ON WHICH TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND ESPECIALLY JOINT DEFENSE COOPERATION WITHIN NATO ARE BASED HAS LOST A GREAT DEAL OF ITS STRENGTH. WITH THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMBARBO DECISION THIS SITUATION MAKES ITSELF FELT A LITTLE MORE EACH DAY.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND CONGRESS ARE AWARE AND CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THE SUBJECT AND THE IRREVERSIBLE CONSEQUENCES WHICH WILL RESULT FROM THE CONTINUATION OF THIS SITUATION.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO INTERPRET AS A SOFTENING OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT'S STANCE THE FACT THAT THE USG HAS ASKED US FOR TIME TO ACHIEVE A RESULT FROM ITS EFFORTS TO BRING CLARITY TO THE SITUATION. WE CONSIDER THE USG BOUND BY ITS STATEMENTS AND PROMISES TO US.

HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS ERROR OF ASSESSMENT TO INTERPRET THIS AS INDEFINITE WAITING. WE DO NOT KNOW TO WHAT EXTENT CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERS HAVE EMBRACED SUCH A MISTAKEN ASSESSMENT. IT IS OUR WISH THAT CONGRESS NOT MAKE SUCH A WRONG ASSESSMENT. TURKEY'S DETERMINED STANCE ABOUT THE EMBARGO DECISION MUST NOT BE MISINTERPRETED.

IN THE EVENT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMBARGO - WHICH MUST BE REGARDED AS A HOSTILE ACTION BETWEEN TWO STATES WITH NORMAL RELATIONS, MUCH LESS BETWEEN TWO ALLIES - IT IS A VERY GRAVE MISTAKE TO THINK THAT TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS WILL NOT BE HARMED.

IT WILL BE ADDING A NEW MISTAKE TO THE EXISTING SERIES OF MISTAKES NOT TO INTERPRET AT ITS TRUE VALUE TURKEY'S HAVING A SERIOUS AND PLANNED STANCE WHICH DOES NOT RESORT TO THE EXCESSIVE ACTIONS TAKEN OR LIKELY TO BE TAKEN BY OTHERS, BUT WHICH DOES NOT LESSEN HER DETERMINATION.

MISTAKEN ASSESSMENTS OF TURKEY'S STANCE WILL INFLICT
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INCURABLE INJURIES ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT WILL REST EXCLUSIVELY WITH THOSE WHO MAKE SUCH GRAVE MISTAKES. END QUOTE.

3. PRINCIPLE EXCERPTS FROM MILLIYET INTERVIEW WITH NILUFER YALCIN:

"(QUOTING ESENBEL) 'WITH A DECISION TAKEN IN THE FIRST

FOUNDATION YEARS OF NATO, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE BLACK SEA AND THE STRAITS WAS GIVEN TO TURKEY AND THE DEFENSE OF THE AEGEAN TO GREECE. UNDER TODAY'S CONDITIONS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THIS TO CONTINUE UNCHANGED. FOR THIS REASON WE HAVE ASKED FOR A SPHERE OF RESPONSIBILITY BOTH IN THE AIR AND ON THE SEAS IN THE AEGEAN. THIS QUESTION HAS GAINED IMPORTANCE IN VIEW OF THE GREEK DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION OF THE ALLIANCE. IF THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL BECOMES DEFINITE IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL FOR TURKEY'S ROLE IN NATO DEFENSE TO BE REVISED. FOR INSTANCE, TURKEY DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE WINTEX EXERCISE BECAUSE GREECE DID NOT PERMIT ANY PLANNING TO BE MADE OVER THE AEGEAN. TURKEY COULD NOT HAVE MADE HER PLANS FOR AN ENEMY ATTACK FROM THE SEA WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE AEGEAN AREA. WE FOUND NO POINT IN PARTICIPATING IN IT BECAUSE SUCH AN EXERCISE WOULD HAVE NO SIGNIFICANCE. NOW NATO WILL DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS.'

"ESENBEL SAID IT WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR TURKEY TO WAIT 'INDEFINITELY' FOR A DECISION ABOUT AMERICAN AID. THE 'FEW WEEKS' SUGGESTED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER MEANT THE END OF APRIL. 'WE WILL NOT ACCEPT AID WITH TIME LIMITS. WE HAVE ALSO INFORMED THEM OF THIS. EITHER IT STARTS AND CONTINUES AS BEFORE IN NORMAL PERIODS AND WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, OR TURKEY TAKES THE NECESSARY MEASURES. IF THE EMBARGO IS NOT LIFTED, TURKEY WILL GIVE A NOTE AND NOTIFICATION OF A DATE FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS AND THEN THEY COME TO A STANDSTILL WITHIN A PRIORITY LIST ESTABLISHED ON THE BASIS OF NATIONAL INTERESTS. THUS TURKEY NO LONGER SHARES THE RISKS CREATED BY THE UNILATERAL VIOLATION OF THE 1969 AGREEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES'.

"ESENBEL SAID THAT SUCH A SITUATION WOULD WEAKEN NATO AND REQUIRE A RESHUFFLING AND REORGANIZATION OF THE
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FORCES TURKEY ASSIGNS TO NATO. 'TURKEY IS DETERMINED TO STAY ON IN NATO. BUT CERTAINLY THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMBARGO WILL NOT AFFECT TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS CONSTRUCTIVELY. IT MUST ALSO BE REMEMBERED THAT EVEN IF THE AID IS RESUMED, THE FACT THAT SUCH A DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN HAS PUSHED TURKEY PUBLIC OPINION AND ESPECIALLY MILLIONS OF IMPARTIAL CITIZENS TO DISTRUST OF AND HARD FEELINGS FOR THE UNITED STATES. IF AID IS RESUMED, DEFENSE COOPERATION CONTINUES WITH THE USA, BUT IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE AMERICANS TO REGAIN WHAT THEY HAVE LOST WITH THE TURKISH PEOPLE.'

"CONCERNING CLAIMS THAT NATO'S MEDITERRANEAN DEFENSE WOULD COLLAPSE WITH THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NATO DEFENSE SETUP, ESENBEL SAID, 'THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE NO REASON FOR DISINTEGRATION. GREECE IS A LINK ELEMENT IN THE NATO STRATEGY.

THE REAL MILITARY BURDEN IS ON TURKEY. IT IS POSSIBLE TO SEE THIS IMMEDIATELY WHEN A GLANCE IS TAKEN AT THE MAP. FOR THIS REASON, WHEN THE GREEK DECISION TO WITHDRAW HAS BEEN HEARD, THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT AND PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED EVEN THEN THAT TURKEY COULD ASSUME NEW DEFENSE DUTIES WITHIN A NEW STRATEGY. HOWEVER, NONE OF US WANTS SUCH A SITUATION TO ARISE OR THE NATO ALLIANCE TO BE WEAKENED FURTHER'."

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